LEAVE TEXT

HEYLIN (HEILYN or HEYLYN), ROWLAND (1562?-1631), publisher of Welsh books; he was descended from the ancient Powys family of Heylin of Pentreheylin (on the Vyrnwy), who had held the estate since the middle ages, claiming descent, through Rhys Sais (d. 1070), from Tudur Trevor, and the hereditary office of heilyn (cupbearer) to the princes of Powys. One of his ancestors (Grono ab Heilyn) was envoy from Llywelyn ap Gruffydd (1254-1282) (q.v.) to Edward I in 1277. Rowland Heylin was apprenticed (26 April 1567) to Thomas Wade, a London merchant, was made free of the Ironmongers' Company (of which he twice became master) in 1584, became treasurer to the Muscovy Co. in 1623, and was elected alderman and sheriff in 1624. He made a considerable fortune, and used it in co-operation with Sir Thomas Myddelton (1550-1631) (q.v.), to finance the publication of Welsh books, which issued from the London press in large numbers, 1630-32. They included the Welsh-Latin dictionary of John Davies (1570?-1644) (q.v.) of Mallwyd, the translation by Rowland Vaughan (q.v.) of the *Practice of Piety*, of bishop Lewis Bayly (q.v.), and the Welsh quarto Bible'of 1630, bound up with the Welsh Prayer Book and the psalter of Edmund Prys (q.v.). He d., childless, in 1631. He impressed contemporaries as 'a man of singular goodness.' His portrait hangs in Ironmongers' Hall.

With him ended the direct line of Heylin of Pentreheylin, the estate passing through the marriage of his daughter to the Niccols and the Congreves. His nephew Henry Heylin became the father of PETER HEYLIN (1599-1662), a theologian, who is noticed in *D.N.B.*

Will (PCC) 15 Feb 1632

Heylyn, Rowland (1562–1632), ironmonger and church benefactor, was born in Shrewsbury, the son of David Heylyn, who was of Welsh ancestry, and his wife, Alice. After attending the free school there from 1571 he went to London, where in 1576 he became an apprentice ironmonger. He was admitted to the company in 1584 and subsequently served twice as its master, in 1614 and 1625. Elected an alderman from Cripplegate in April 1624, later that year he was also elected sheriff of London. At an unknown date he married Alice (*d.* 1641), daughter of Richard Aldworth of Reading; they had no surviving children.

A man of deep religious convictions, Heylyn was a particularly good example of a puritan layman whose sense of vocation moved him to take an active role in the church and in society. According to John Stow he was responsible for printing the Bible in Welsh 'in a more portable bulk' (Beaven, 2.178). In 1626 he became one of the feoffees for impropriations, a group of puritan lawyers, ministers, and merchants whose goal was to buy up church livings and staff them with godly divines. Heylyn, who can be considered as one of the two most important lay members, served as treasurer and then in 1629 as president; in 1628 the feoffees met at his house. He raised funds, and in an early list of donors is listed as giving £500, the largest single donation. In 1628 he obtained for the feoffees the advowson of the vicarage of St Alkmund in his native Shrewsbury, a lease of the tithes of St Mary's, and a barn at Cotton near the same town. Ironically, it was his kinsman Peter Heylyn who, as chaplain to Archbishop William Laud, waged a determined and vocal attack against the group, describing them as plotters and conspirators.

From 1631 Heylyn served as president of the Bethlem and Bridewell hospitals. His will, dated 5 September 1629, contains many charitable benefactions. He left significant sums for the poor to the corporation of Shrewsbury and for imprisoned debtors in London, and sums for the ill and indigent, as well as a large donation for poor ministers. His books were donated to Shrewsbury Library. His generosity to the Ironmongers' Company included a gift for young men and a stipend for a yearly sermon on the date of the Gunpowder Plot.

Heylyn died in London in February 1632. His will was proved on 15 February by his widow, who inherited much of the residue of his estate; the remainder went to his sisters, nephews, nieces, and cousins. The feoffees did not long survive him, being suppressed by Laud in 1633.

Thomas Hunt of Gouldstone in Cheswardine, Salop c1538-....
m Elizabeth OR Ann dau of Humphrey Gouldstone of Gouldstone in Cheswardine, Salop
chn: John Hunt
Richard Hunt below
Anthony Hunt
George Hunt
Alice Hunt m Rowland Heylin of London
[above from BLG 1914]

1624, Apr.20 (sworn 20 or 22)(D) (fn. 15) Rowland Heylin (or Heylyn), IronmongerCripplegate, 1624-32S. 1624-5vice Overman
President Bethlem and Bridewell 1631-2; Master Ironmongers 1614, 1625. Died February, 1632; Will [P.C.C. 23 Audley] September 5, 1629; proved February 15, 1632.

From: 'Chronological list of aldermen: 1601-1650', The Aldermen of the City of London: Temp. Henry III - 1912 (1908), pp. 47-75. URL: https://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=67241 Date accessed: 15 February 2009.

Rowland Heylin of London citizen c1562-1632
m Alice Hunt dau of Thomas Hunt of Gouldstone in Cheswardine, Salop c1538-.... [BLG 1914]
m Alice Aldworth dau of Richard Aldworth of Reading; d 1641 [DNB]

(presented at Mayfield)

On the Octaves of St. Hillary. 15 James I. [20 Jan 1617.8] Between Rowland Heylin, complainant, and Walter Aston, knight and baronet, and Gertrude, his wife, deforciants of 2 messuages, 2 dovecotes, 2 gardens, 2 orchards, 300 acres of land, 200 acres of meadow, 600 acres of pasture, and 40 acres of wood in Mafeild otherwise Mathfeild, Colton otherwise Coulton, Haywood, and Blithbury. Walter and Gertrude granted the said tenements to Rowland, to be held by the said Rowland from the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord last past for 21 years, paying by the year one grain of pepper at the Feast of St. Michael, for which Rowland gave them £700 [SHC 1903 p41-2]